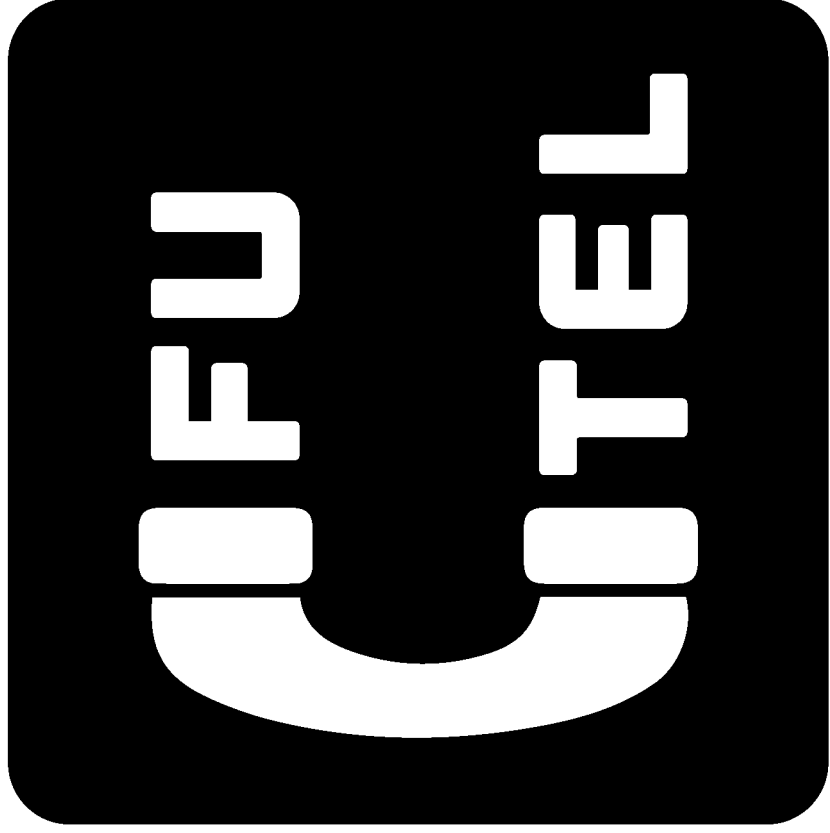


Party Line



Party Line

Official Organ of Futel



Spring 2016
2015 Review Edition

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Acknowledgements

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Support Futel!

Futel is made possible by volunteers and contributors, who we thank! Futel is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and contributions are tax deductible. We also seek creative and technical contributors. Dial 0 from any Futel phone, or speak to the operator at 503-468-1337, or email operator@futel.net, or see our website at <http://futel.net>. Thanks to everyone who has supported Futel!



PLEASE DIAL ALL DOMESTIC CALLS



NO COIN NEEDED FOR ANY CALLS
Call anywhere in the Continental USA for **\$0.00**
Emergency SOS ... **Dial 911** Operator ... **Dial 0**
FUTEL • PO BOX 2422, PORTLAND, OR 97208 • <http://futel.net>
SAVE YOUR QUARTERS FOR ROBOTRON • OPERATORS ARE OFTEN STANDING BY

At Futel, we believe in the preservation of public telephone hardware as a means of providing access to the agora for everybody, and toward that goal we are privileged to provide free domestic telephone calls, voicemail, and telephone-mediated services. We do not judge the motivations of our users, or who they choose to call; if they don't have someone to call, we can provide a presence on the other end. Denial of telephony services has long been a tactic used against undesirable populations, and our devices will counteract that. But more importantly, we will help to establish a new era of communication, one in which reaching out is not only desirable, but mandatory.

To what extent are our interactions mediated by intelligent machines? Who is doing the talking when we let them decide who we interact with and what constitutes appropriate topics of communication? We believe that the time has come to greet each other not with our heads down, staring at our hands and begging for the permission of the minds that oversee our networks, but proudly, standing tall, with our eyes open and aware of our surroundings.

We are primarily driven by the basic needs that we see on the streets every day, by giving something away that is cheap for us but valuable to the recipient. But we hope that we can also build a tower of Babel on top of that, a monument of telephones and switching networks and cascading psychological structures which will give the community something else as well, something we may not appreciate until it has forever changed us.

2015 In Review

Operations Update

2015 was a year of shoring up operations. We already had tooling and procedures in place to deploy backends and frontends, because when we get hacked, or when a provider goes down, or when some of our janky used physical infrastructure fails, we need to be able to deploy a new instance with minimal downtime. What we didn't have was monitoring, where we would know when something had happened and be able to react to it quickly.



It has taken some work to build robustness, and it sometimes distracts us from our more creative efforts, but it's also fun to build a system that can adapt to problems.

501(c)(3) Organization

Another milestone in our plodding quest for legitimacy was achieved when Futel became a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to Futel are tax deductible! We were able to do this with the help of the Umbrella organization, which made it affordable.

2015-10-03

Caller hung up, I called back, receiver hung up.

2015-11-02

Caller wanted the ZIP code for Union Station, which I provided.

2015-11-22

About 30 seconds of no audio, followed by a busy signal.

2015-12-11

Caller needed help with voice mailbox creation. Claims he never received a box number. He was willing to just give it another try. Also mentioned how grateful he was for the service, says the phone had "saved my life" more than once.

2015-12-12

Caller asked for the phone number for the payphone, which I provided.

2015-12-12

Caller asked for the phone number for the payphone, stated that he had been the previous caller, and complained that when he called it he reached New York.

2015-12-28

Caller wanted to know if phone would receive incoming calls. I neglected to mention faulty ringer.



2015 Operator Log Highlights

2015-06-22

Caller wanted number for “social services”, unable to be more specific. Told her how to navigate to the 211 directory entry.

2015-07-23

Caller wanted to make a phone call. Told him how to navigate the main menu.

2015-07-24

Caller wanted me to transfer her to a number. Explained that the feature was not yet available, and instructed her on how to make a call from the main menu.

2015-08-09

Missed call, but caller left a message: “I need the number to Schlotszky’s Deli. Trying to get a nice pastrami delivered to 9th and Ave of the America’s.” He also left his phone number.

2015-09-01

No response. Called back and asked if they needed an operator. They said “no, my bad.” and hung up.

2015-09-17

Interrupted during a screening of Repo Man. Answered while attempting to retrieve phone, caller probably heard a few seconds of the movie.

2015-09-27

Heard “Girl From Ipanema”. Filed bug report.

2015-10-01

Caller needed to know the current time.

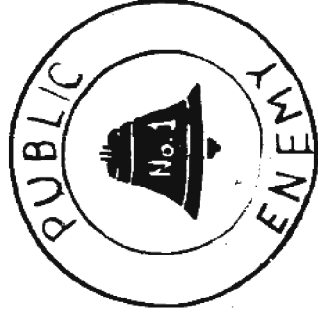


RACC Grant Received

We received a grant from the Regional Arts and Culture Commission, which will greatly help us with our 2016 operating expenses.

Right To Dream Too

Futel now provides telephone services and occasional IT help for Right To Dream Too, currently located at 3rd and West Burnside. We’re enthusiastic about being able to support R2D2.



Destructive Maintenance

We knew this day would come. When we installed this phone, the lock immediately jammed, and we couldn't open or remove it. Over a year later, the phone finally malfunctioned. We couldn't just pick or drill the lock, because it wasn't the lock that was stuck, it was the arm and the latch. We eventually destroyed the mechanism without damaging the phone using a rotary grinder and a lot of patience (and hammering and prying).



a basic knowledge of the services provided by the calling Futel phone. The level and nature of the operator assistance provided is at the discretion of the operator, but an appropriate effort should be made.



Operator calls should be promptly entered in the operator log. There are several ways to do this, including sending a voicemail, text message, or email to your handler, or editing the log in the repository. Carrying a notepad is recommended, the pages of which can be entered when convenient, or just mailed to your handler. An operator log entry includes the date and time, the operator's name, and a description of the interaction. Logs are an important tool for monitoring and improving our service.

Operator Conduct

An operator should attempt to provide a positive interaction with the caller. Positivity may require adapting to behavior which is crazy, really high, or just annoying; basic compassion for the caller should be exhibited. This does not necessarily require cheerfulness, insincerity, or tolerance of abusive behavior. Terminate any call which is inappropriate or unpleasant. Do not divulge information which might reveal your identity or location, and defend the security, integrity, and honor of Futel.

Final Word For Operators

Congratulations! Memorize this handbook. You will find your service as a Futel operator to be rewarding and fulfilling.

Futel Operator's Handbook 2016



Congratulations! You have chosen or have been chosen to serve your community as a Futel operator! To succeed at your role, you will need to always follow these simple guidelines.

Answering Operator Calls

Operator calls and messages will arrive with a CallerID number of the phone they are calling from. Do not answer operator calls unless you are able to provide operator assistance. Answer an operator call with an introduction which indicates your ability, such as “Operator”, “Futel, this is Jimmy”, or “Hello”.

Operator Duties

Operator duties will vary, but can generally be expected to require qualities such as attention, web access, a willingness to help, and

ToorCamp 2014



We took a Futel installation to ToorCamp in Neah Bay, Washington.



Our closet. Survived the mist, but got warm in there.



Futel radiation monitor. Select option 2, hold the sample to the sensor, and hear a recording of how many millisieverts per hour it is emitting on the handset.

We had been planning on running a hostile conference call, where every phone in the camp would be called at once and con-

nected to the conference - an ancient prank phone call trick. But Shadytel had a hardware failure with the machine that was providing us SIP service, and we only had equipment to bridge one PSTN line to our VOIP box at a time. So instead we called every phone, randomly, one phone every minute, and had a synthesized voice read the current ambient radiation.



Noisebridge put our conference line on their amplifier. When we heard it and realized that half the camp had to listen to us instead of their usual techno music, we had to show them what kind of awesome feedback we could make. Then they retaliated for a while, and then someone from Shadytel subjected us to some weird signals, or maybe the equipment was protesting, I don't know.

Thanks to ToorCamp for the art grant to help us get equipment and people out there, and Shadytel for being our upstream provider. Find us at ToorCamp in 2016!



Fate Of The Payphone



This phone kiosk was apparently hit by a car. A single bolt and cable stay kept it attached to the earth, but it seems like the enclosure and pedestal absorbed the impact, protecting the phone. It was gone a week later. Hopefully a collector picked it up and not a scrapper.

